

**Annual Executive Summary  
Virginia Indian Commemorative Commission  
January - December 2016**

**Creation and Charge of the Commission**

On October 22, 2009, Governor Tim Kaine issued Executive Order 100 that established the Virginia Indian Commemorative Commission pursuant to House Joint Resolution 680 (2009), Chief Patroned by Delegate Christopher K. Peace. The General Assembly approved House Joint Resolution 680 requesting the creation of a commission to recommend an appropriate monument in Capitol Square to commemorate the life, achievements, and legacy of American Indians in the Commonwealth.

On February 5, 2013, Governor Bob McDonnell continued the Commission with Executive Order 59. The continuation of the Virginia Indian Commemorative Commission was done in solemn recognition of the courage, persistence, determination, and cultural values of Virginia's Indians. The Virginia Indian has significantly enhanced and contributed to the Virginia society.

On March 25, 2014, Governor Terry McAuliffe continued the Commission with Executive Order 10. The continuation of the Virginia Indian Commemorative Commission was done in solemn recognition of the courage, persistence, determination, and cultural values of Virginia's Indians. The Virginia Indian has significantly enhanced and contributed to the Virginia society.

From its inception, the Commission has met regularly and developed a plan for execution of a suitable tribute monument, but there is more work to be done.

The charge of the Commission, as stated in the continuing Executive Order is the following:

*The Commission shall identify an artist, select a design, and take all necessary actions to coordinate the construction, pursuant to applicable state construction policies, of an appropriate tribute monument on Capitol Square to commemorate the life, achievements, and legacy of American Indians in the Commonwealth. The Commission shall seek private funding for the operation and support of the Commission and the erection of an appropriate monument. However, the costs of implementation of the Commission, its work, and the compensation and reimbursement of members, estimated to be \$5,000.00, shall be borne by the Commission from such private funds as it may acquire to cover the costs of its operation and work. The Commission may establish an organization with 501c(3) status for fundraising purposes. The Commission is vested with all the powers to carry out the intent of the General Assembly under House Joint Resolution 680 (2009). All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission, upon request. An estimated 200 hours of staff time will be required to support the work of the Commission.*

*The Commission shall report annually the status of its work, including any findings and recommendations, to the General Assembly, by December 1st each year.*

## **Composition of the Commission**

The Virginia Indian Commemorative Commission shall consist of the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor of Virginia, the Speaker of the House of Delegates, or their respective designees, three members of the House of Delegates appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates, the Clerk of the House of Delegates, the Chair[man] of the Senate Committee on Rules, two citizen members of the Senate appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules, the Clerk of the Senate, the Executive Director of the Capitol Square Preservation Council, three members who shall be representatives of Virginia Indians to be appointed by the Governor, and the Executive Director of the Virginia Capitol Foundation. Additional members may be appointed at the Governor's discretion. The Chairman and the Vice Chairman shall be appointed by the Governor.

Members of the Commission serve without compensation, but they may receive reimbursement for expenses incurred in the discharge of their official duties.

As of December 2016, the members of the Commission were: Governor Terence R. McAuliffe (Chairman), Lt. Governor Ralph S. Northam, Kelly Thomasson, Secretary of the Commonwealth, Speaker of the House William J Howell, Delegates Christopher K. Peace (Vice Chairman), Delores L. McQuinn, and Brenda L. Pogge, the Clerk of the House of Delegates G. Paul Nardo, Senator Ryan T. McDougle, Senator Thomas A. Garrett, Jr., Senator Rosalyn R. Dance, Clerk of the Senate Susan Clarke Schaar, Executive Director of the Virginia Capitol Foundation Colleen D. Messick and the following gubernatorial appointees: Chief Ken Adams, Sid Turner, & Frances Broaddus-Crutchfield.

## **Meetings and Significant Actions**

The first meeting of the calendar year was held April 5, 2016 in Senate Room A in the General Assembly Building.

After call to order by Delegate Peace brief introductions were made. Alice Lynch, then Executive Director of the Virginia Capitol Foundation provided a Capital Campaign update. The members then reviewed the schematic designs for Mantle, the Capitol Square Indian Monument, prepared by Alan Michelson, LLC on February 23, 2016 and provided for the Department of General Services. The schematic design included an overview of the project, the site, construction materials, code information, structural items, site utilities, cost estimates and plan materials. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the schematic design 9-0. The Commission adjourned.

The second meeting of the calendar year was held July 13, 2016 in Senate Room B in the General Assembly Building.

After call to order by Delegate Peace brief introductions were made. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the construction documents 13-0. The Commission adjourned.

## ***MANTLE: the Tribute and the Artist***

Alan Michelson, a Mohawk member of Six Nations of the Grand River and an award winning artist, was selected based on his unique design. The Commission's artist attributed his ultimate inspiration to Chief Powhatan's "mantle," which was a deerskin ceremonial cloak, decorated with shell-beads sewn in spiral clusters. Therefore the tribute's design takes on this distinctive spiral shape which for Powhatan would have symbolized his preeminence and authority.

*Mantle* will be installed in the gently sloping southwest portion of the square, just north of the Bell Tower, with an eastern facing entrance. As the "Front Door" of the Commonwealth, historic Capitol Square provides a dramatic setting with historic significance and a multitude of visitors. The Square is a premier place to recognize outstanding Virginians and events, including our Virginia Indians. Oriented to the earth and incorporating existing trees in the area, the tribute, *Mantle*, combines four integrated spiral elements to create the shape of a Nautilus, a shell which represents strength, knowledge of the past, continuous growth, and beauty. A five-foot wide winding footpath following the outline of the monument will serve as a labyrinth which in some Indian cultures represents a sacred path to the home of an ancestor. Complementing the path will be a continuous, smooth stone wall, which also serves as a bench. Natural landscaping throughout the monument will consist of a selection of perennial native plant species, including wildflowers. A meditation area, at the center of the spiral, will feature an infinity pool made to resemble the pottery indicative of Virginia tribes. The water within the pool reflects the river culture existing within our native tribes. Decorating the sides of the sculpture are frieze-like, life-size reliefs of corn, squash, and beans (the Three Sisters) as well as oyster shells from the Chesapeake and other objects significant to the region and its native inhabitants. As visitors make their way through the path, their movements will evoke the circular dance formations found in the American Indian culture. This new communal area will create a respectful relationship with the surrounding natural world, reflecting certain spiritual values, which set Indians apart from other cultures. Finally, state-of-the-art educational programs will be developed with the assistance of the Virginia Capitol Foundation to educate the community in this revered place.

###